

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEA-07 EUR-08 INR-05 CIAE-00 INRE-00

SSO-00 PM-03 DODE-00 SCCT-01 SY-02 /031 R

DRAFTED BY AF/E GWSCOTT:NB

APPROVED BY AF:WESCHAUFEELE

AF/E:WBCOOTE

NEA/ARP: COCECIL

INR/RAF:AMREID

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O R 100047Z FEB 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

S E C R E T STATE 032070

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SA,SO, FR, FT, ET, PDEV, PFOR, PINS

SUBJECT: US VIEWS ON DJIBOUTI INCIDENT AND TFAI DEVELOP-
MENTS.

REF: JIDDA 952 (NOTAL)

1. YOU MAY PASS FOLLOWING ASSESSMENT OF DJIBOUTI INCI-
DENT AND OUR VIEWS ON FUTURE OF TFAI TO FOREIGN MINISTER
PRINCE SAUD AL FAISAL.

2. IT APPEARS AT PRESENT THAT INDEPENDENCE OF TFAI IS
LIKELY TO BE GRANTED WITHIN THE NEXT TWO YEARS. BECAUSE

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OF DJIBOUTI'S STRATEGIC LOCATION GUARDING THE MOUTH OF THE

RED SEA AND ITS IMPORTANCE TO ETHIOPIA AS THE TERMINUS OF THE ADDIS ABABA/DJIBOUTI RAILWAY, ANY THREAT TO ITS INDEPENDENCE BY SOMALIA THREATENS IMPORTANT INTERESTS OF OTHER STATES IN THE AREA, MOST ESPECIALLY ETHIOPIA. IT IS THEREFORE IMPORTANT THAT THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE BE CAREFULLY MANAGED IN ORDER TO PREVENT INSTABILITY IN THE HORN.

3. WHEN GOF ANNOUNCED ITS DECISION TO GRANT INDEPENDENCE TO TFAI, IT STATED THAT FRANCE WAS READY TO GUARANTEE THE "INTEGRITY AND SECURITY" OF THE FUTURE STATE. THIS

COULD BE MOST EFFECTIVELY DONE BY RETAINING FRENCH MILITARY PRESENCE IN NEWLY FORMED STATE FOR UNSPECIFIED PERIOD. WE UNDERSTAND THAT FRANCE WILL ATTEMPT TO SECURE GUARANTEES OF THAT SECURITY FROM NEIGHBORING STATES, FROM OAU AND FROM THE ARAB LEAGUE.

4. WE SEE NO SIGN THAT THE MOGADISCIO GOVERNMENT HAS TRULY RELINQUISHED ITS IRREDENTIST VIEW OF THE TERRITORY AND WE FEAR THAT IT SUPPORTS INDEPENDENCE ONLY AS A PRELUDE TO UNION WITH SOMALIA. SOMALI STRATEGY APPEARS TO BE AN ATTEMPT TO DISCOURAGE SUPPORT FOR FRENCH TRANSFER OF POWER TO WHAT GSDR DESCRIBES A "PUPPET REGIME" OF ALI AREF OY OFFERING FRANCE CERTAIN INDUCEMENTS TO COMPROMISE ITS FORMULA FOR INDEPENDENCE. ONE INDUCEMENT IS SOMALI ACQUIESCENCE IN CONTINUED FRENCH ACCESS TO NAVAL FACILITIES IF A "GENUINELY ELECTED INDEPENDENT GOVERNMENT" SO DESIRES. AT THE SAME TIME PRESIDENT SIAD WILL BE TEMPTED TO STEP UP PRESSURE THROUGH A CAMPAIGN OF POLITICAL SUBVERSION AND VIOLENCE, AND THUS ATTEMPT TO DISCOURAGE THE FRENCH FROM REMAINING.

5. WE HAVE NO CERTAIN INFORMATION WHICH WOULD PERMIT US TO JUDGE THE FACTS OF THE SHOOT-OUT BETWEEN FRENCH SECURITY FORCES, THE KIDNAPPERS, AND THE SOMALI MILITARY. HOWEVER, THE FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF THE SOMALI COAST HAS LONG RECEIVED SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORT FROM PRESIDENT SIAD AND WE FEAR THAT THE KIDNAPPING ATTEMPT IS A STEP IN A SOMALI PROGRAM OF TERRORISM TO DISCOURAGE THE

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FRENCH. WE BELIEVE THAT IT IS IN THE INTEREST OF OURSELVES, OF THE SAUDI ARABIAN GOVERNMENT AND OF OTHER POWERS WHO HOPE TO MAINTAIN PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE AREA TO DISCOURAGE SUCH ACTS OF TERRORISM AND TO ENCOURAGE PEACEFUL TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE UNDER CONDITIONS WHICH GUARANTEE THE VITAL INTERESTS OF ALL PARTIES IN THE AREA. USG WILL BE FOLLOWING TFAI DEVELOPMENTS CLOSELY AND WILL KEEP IN TOUCH WITH SAG AND

OTHER GOVERNMENTS WHICH HAVE A DIRECT INTEREST IN THIS
AREA. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CIVIL DISORDERS, BRIEFING MATERIALS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE032070
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760049-0552
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760263/aaaacdiv.tel
Line Count: 117
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 76 JIDDA 952
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 APR 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <10 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US VIEWS ON DJIBOUTI INCIDENT AND TFAI DEVELOP- MENTS.
TAGS: PDEV, PFOR, PINS, SA, SO, FR, FT, ET
To: JIDDA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006